

Message Text

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SUBJ: CONFUSION ABOUT VIETNAMESE REFUGEES' RESETTLEMENT IN IRAN

REF: IATF FT CHAFFEE 202210Z

1. UPON RECEIPT OF REFTEL WE DISCUSSED SITUATION WITH NASSERI WHO IS DISAPPOINTED WITH WAY FIRST TRANCHE OF REFUGEES HAS WORKED OUT BUT STILL HOPES PROCEDURES CAN BE DEVELOPED SO IRAN CAN TAKE MORE. PARS CONTAINER CORP WHICH HAD AGREED TO EMPLOY ORIGINAL 15 TESTED THEM AND FOUND ONLY THREE CAPABLE OF HANDLING 10-TON TRUCKS AND TRACTOR-TRAILERS THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO BE CERTIFIED FOR. IN "SPIRIT OF COOPERATION" PARS WILL CONTINUE EMPLOYMENT OF OTHERS IN NON-DRIVING JOBS, BUT THEIR LACK OF QUALIFICATIONS HAS MADE GOI CHARY OF TAKING MORE VIETNAMESE.

2. NASSERI REMINDED US THAT GOI'S PRIMARY INTEREST HAD BEEN IN MEDICAL AND PARAMEDICAL PERSONNEL. WHEN INFORMED THERE WERE MORE THAN 300 SUCH INDIVIDUALS AMONG REFUGEES, GOI INTERVIEW TEAM WAS FORMED OF OFFICIALS SKILLED IN HEALTH FIELDS. UPON ARRIVAL IN CENTERS, TEAM DISCOVERED ONLY ABOUT FIVE IN HEALTH CATEGORY WERE AVAILABLE, SO ON HIS OWN AUTHORITY NASSERI AGREED TO TAKE UP TO FIFTY QUALIFIED TRUCK DRIVERS. HE SAID SPECIFIC

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CONDITIONS FOR ACCEPTANCE OF FIRST GROUP HAD BEEN AGREED UPON,

INCLUDING INTERVIEW BY HIMSELF WHERE FEASIBLE, BUT AT MINIMUM SUBMISSION OF REFUGEE'S APPLICATION AND QUALIFICATIONS TO IRANIAN EMBASSY TEN DAYS IN ADVANCE SO THEY COULD BE MATCHED UP WITH POTENTIAL EMPLOYERS. NASSERI ALSO SAID DRIVERS WERE TO HAVE COME AFTER NOVEMBER 20, NOT BEFORE. WHEN HE LEARNED FIRST GROUP WAS ON WAY HE HAD TALKED ON TELEPHONE WITH JUDY CHAVCHAVADZE AND KEN LEWIS(PHONETIC) WHO ASSURED HIM, HE SAYS, THAT VIETNAMESE IN THAT GROUP WERE AMONG THOSE HE HAD INTERVIEWED OR APPROVED. WHEN THEY ARRIVED HE FOUND SOME WERE NOT AND HE ASKED US TO INFORM IATF NOT TO SEND OTHERS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE(TEHRAN 11345). NASSERI POINTED OUT THAT VIETNAMESE COMING TO IRAN MUST BE SELECTED MORE CAREFULLY THAN KOREANS AND OTHERS RECRUITED FOR SIMILAR JOBS SINCE ONLY VIETNAMESE WILL BECOME PERMANENT RESIDENTS.

3. BELIEVE GOI SINCERELY WISHES TO HELP ALLEVIATE INDOCHINA REFUGEE PROBLEM TO EXTENT POSSIBLE. HOWEVER, SINCE IRAN IS CURRENTLY ATTEMPTING TO ABSORB AND INTERGRATE SOME 30,000 KURDISH REFUGEES, GOI DOES NOT FEEL ABLE TO TAKE VIETNAMESE UNLESS THEY POSSESS SKILLS NEEDED HERE. FOR THIS REASON NASSERI INSISTS THAT IN FUTURE QUALIFICATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL REFUGEES BE SUBMITTED TO IRANIAN EMBASSY AT LEAST 10 DAYS BEFORE ANY PLANNED MOVEMENT TO ENSURE THAT ALL ARE ACCEPTABLE AND THAT EMPLOYMENT IS READY FOR THEM. MINLABOR MOINI HAS SENT TELEGRAM CONFIRMING THESE REQUIREMENTS TO GOI EMBASSY WASHINGTON AND INSTRUCTING IT NOT TO ISSUE VISAS UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN MET. SUGGEST IATF WORK CLOSELY WITH IRANIAN EMBASSY IN SELECTING AND PROCESSING ADDITIONAL REFUGEES FOR IRAN SO AS NOT TO LOSE POSSIBILITY OF THEIR COMING HERE FOR RESETTLEMENT.

4. ON NOVEMBER 24 TRAN THIEN THANH, ONE OF THOSE WHO ARRIVED LAST WEEK WITH FAMILY, TOLD CONSULAR OFFICER HE HAD BEEN INFORMED BEFORE LEAVING U.S. THAT HE RETAINED RIGHT TO RETURN TO U.S. AND THAT HE PLANNED TO DO SO AND BECOME U.S. CITIZEN AFTER WORKING SOME TIME IN IRAN. EMBASSY IS UNCERTAIN UNDER WHAT CONDITIONS REFUGEES MAY RETURN AND WOULD APPRECIATE CLARIFICATION SO WE CAN RESPOND CORRECTLY WHEN ASKED. ACCORDING TO STATE 272939, INS TRAVEL DOCUMENT SAYS THEY MAY RETURN WITHIN VALIDITY OF DOCUMENT, BUT WE HAD UNDERSTOOD THAT TO APPLY ONLY IF GOI FOUND THEM UNACCEPTABLE. HOW LONG IS DOCUMENT VALID? CAN A REFUGEE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CHANGE HIS MIND AND RETURN TO U.S. AT WILL? FOR HOW LONG? TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND RECRIMINATIONS, SUGGEST ALL PARTIES CONCERNED BE CLEARLY INFORMED OF GROUND-RULES REGARDING RIGHT OF REFUGEES TO RETURN TO U.S.
HELMS

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